



Teacher Leadership and Compensation

External Evaluation Support



After a competitive Request for Proposal process the Iowa Department of Education contracted with the [American Institutes for Research](#) to evaluate Iowa's Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) initiative. The evaluation is designed to provide information about the progress of this initiative and its effectiveness in meeting state TLC goals. This document provides an overview of this work.

Theory of Action

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) and the American Institutes for Research (AIR) collaborated to develop a Theory of Action to support the evaluation of Teacher Leadership and Compensation. This theory of action creates a framework for evaluating progress toward the state TLC goals. AIR will seek to answer questions such as:

- Has the professional environment improved?
- Has professional learning and collaboration been enhanced?
- Has entry into the profession improved?
- Has there been an increase in career opportunities?
- Has instructional effectiveness improved?
- Has the quality of the teacher applicant pool improved?
- Has teacher retention increased?
- Has student achievement improved?

Interviews and Focus Groups

To capture the experience of districts as they implement TLC along with their successes, challenges, and areas for support, AIR will conduct interviews, site visits, and focus groups in the spring of 2016. Ten districts (four from Cohort 1 and six from Cohort 2) will be selected. AEA and district size will be considered in the selection process to ensure a wide range of perspectives are captured.

Following are some of the research questions that were used to develop survey and interview questions.

1. Has the development of TLC created multiple new leadership roles for teachers?
2. How have districts defined leadership roles for teachers and selected teachers for these roles?
3. What are the expectations of teachers in leadership roles? What percentage of time is spent on these roles?
4. What supports are being provided to new teachers?
5. Have the provided supports changed teacher instructional practice, satisfaction, or efficacy?
6. Has the quality or frequency of teacher collaboration increased?
7. Is there alignment between the IPDM and TLC?
8. Have opportunities and support for professional learning changed?
9. Have districts implemented their plans with fidelity?



Teacher Leadership and Compensation

External Evaluation Support (continued)



AIR will conduct one full-day site visit with each of the ten districts. Prior to the site visit AIR will conduct phone interviews with a representative from each district's AEA. The purpose of this interview will be to learn how AEAs are providing and coordinating supports for districts.

District level interviews and teacher leader focus groups will be conducted the day of the site visit. Ten teacher leaders, representative of different schools and varying grade levels, will be selected for participation.

Interviews and focus groups will be audio recorded and transcribed. After completing an analysis of the interviews and focus groups AIR will identify themes that emerge related to common successes, challenges, effective and ineffective strategies, and recommendations.

Survey

Another component of AIR's evaluation will be to conduct a survey in the spring of 2016. This survey will obtain feedback on changes that accompanied TLC implementation, including school supports, opportunities for teacher professional development and career advancement, teacher compensation, and perceived quality and effectiveness of TLC.

AIR will administer surveys to teachers and school leaders statewide, regardless of TLC implementation status. Collecting responses from both TLC and non-TLC districts will allow for an examination of potential differences in respondents' perceptions. The survey will be conducted online and will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Weekly drawings for prizes will be held.

To address research questions related to TLC program implementation the survey will focus on seven domains: *Teacher leadership*, *Supports for teachers*, *Teacher collaboration*, *Teacher compensation*, *Perceived outcomes*, and *School climate*. Within each domain questions related to teacher leadership responsibilities and activities, perceived effectiveness of roles, perceived fairness and transparency of roles, and knowledge and understanding of teacher leadership roles will be asked.

Administrative data related to districts, schools, teachers, and schools leaders will be collected and will enable AIR to examine how survey responses differ based on demographic characteristics. Additionally, percentages will be calculated to determine the dominate response for each item.

TLC Outcomes Evaluation Design

The final component of AIR's work will be to seek to answer the question: *Is TLC associated with improved student outcomes?* They will use two research designs with existing student achievement data.

The first method will be used to determine within-year TLC effects and will answer the question: *What is the impact of TLC in the first year of implementation?* The second method will be used to estimate impact over time and will answer the questions: *What are the impacts of TLC in the first, second, and third years of implementation? Does the impact of TLC increase over time?*

Each method has strengths and limitations. Using both methods will provide better information about the impact of TLC on student outcomes than either could alone.